The Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art presents Michelangelo: Mind of the Master, featuring more than 50 drawings by Italian Renaissance artist Michelangelo Buonarroti

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The exhibition includes masterpieces formerly in the collection of Queen Christina of Sweden (1626–1689) on loan from the Teylers Museum, the Netherlands, many of which have never been shown in the U.S.

Seated male nude, separate study of his right arm (recto), 1511. Michelangelo Buonarroti (Italian, 1475–1564). Red chalk, heightened with white; 27.9 x 21.4 cm. Teylers Museum, Haarlem, purchased in 1790. © Teylers Museum, Haarlem

Cleveland, OH (September 20, 2019) – The Cleveland Museum of Art displays a selection of some of the finest and most celebrated drawings by Michelangelo Buonarroti (1475–1564) in the extraordinary exhibition, ***Michelangelo: Mind of the Master***. Organized by the Cleveland Museum of Art and the J. Paul Getty Museum in conjunction with the Teylers Museum, Haarlem, the Netherlands, ***Michelangelo: Mind of the Master*** is on view first at the Cleveland Museum of Art from September 22, 2019, to January 5, 2020, before traveling to the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a group of drawings with an illustrious provenance from Queen Christina of Sweden (1626–1689), on loan from the Teylers Museum. The museum is the oldest in the Netherlands, having opened in 1784, and its holdings are unique in the world. This collection of Michelangelo drawings has been in the museum since 1790, and many of them have never been

shown outside Europe. This marks the first time the drawings have left the Teylers Museum as a group in nearly 15 years and the first time the group of drawings has come to the U.S.

“Michelangelo is widely acknowledged as one of the most talented and influential artists in the history of Western art,” says William Griswold, director of the Cleveland Museum of Art. “He was an exceptional draftsman, and the up-close study of Michelangelo’s drawings is an unparalleled experience, one that we are delighted to bring to visitors in Cleveland.”

Drawing was an essential part of Michelangelo’s creative process, and arguably no artist has used it more effectively in the expression of the human form. Given that Michelangelo burned large quantities of his drawings, ***Michelangelo: Mind of the Master*** provides an extraordinary opportunity to examine firsthand a key group of sketches that have survived from the artist’s studio in Rome. Through his drawings, the exhibition explores the range of Michelangelo’s work as a painter, sculptor and architect.

“This group of drawings encapsulates the various ways Michelangelo drew throughout his long career, from anatomical renderings to sketches for the nude male figures on the Sistine Chapel ceiling to drawings from live models for a sculpture on one of the Medici tombs,” says Emily Peters, CMA curator of prints and drawings. “The Teylers group of Michelangelo drawings is among the best preserved in the world, and the red and black chalks used by the artist retain a vibrancy and freshness that allow visitors to really appreciate the immediacy and power of Michelangelo’s thinking on paper.”

The exhibition comprises, in all, 51 drawings by the master, including those drawn on the reverse of other works on view in the show.

The introductory gallery, **Drawing in Italy before Michelangelo**, provides visitors with examples of drawings made in Florence before Michelangelo’ arrival. Artists in the 1400s primarily used pen and ink, as well as metalpoint, and rarely studied anatomy directly (or for that matter drew nude figures) when planning compositions. This changed markedly around 1500 when Michelangelo came of age.

A chronology of Michelangelo’s drawings is presented in the thematic sections that follow:

Michelangelo’s Florence

Due in large part to the funding and patronage of the powerful Medici family, Florence was the center of the Renaissance, which began in Italy in the late 1300s. Born near the city and a resident by age 13, Michelangelo quickly availed himself of the city’s resources and became an apprentice in the workshop of Domenico Ghirlandaio in 1487/88, where he learned to draw with the techniques of the day. By 1490 he was exposed to the powerful Medici circle of scholars, poets and artists, developing a profound appreciation of the art and literature of the classical past.

Early Work: New Models for Art

By around 1490 Michelangelo was studying independently in the garden of the Medici family, which was filled with their collection of ancient Greek and Roman sculpture. Around this time, Michelangelo probably saw and sketched from a human cadaver at the hospital of Santo Spirito in Florence. Both ancient sculpture and anatomical study informed Michelangelo’s rendering of the human body for the

rest of his life. A handful of his anatomical studies and earliest known drawings are on view in this section. The gallery culminates in two rare studies for his Battle of Cascina fresco (1502–04), commissioned by the city of Florence.

Medici Florence

During the 1510s and 1520s, drawing played a key role in helping Michelangelo to imagine, plan and execute complex commissions for the Medici family and Pope Julius II that combined sculpture and architecture. Drawings in this gallery offer rare insight into Michelangelo's careful preparations on paper for the New Sacristy, or Medici tombs, at the Basilica of San Lorenzo (1519–34) in Florence, before taking his chisel to the marble block. Others relate to Michelangelo's commission for the monumental sculptural tomb of Pope Julius II, which was eventually completed and installed in Rome in 1545.

Papal Rome

Continuous commissions called Michelangelo to Rome and defined his life and livelihood until he died in the city at age 88. Drawings relating to Michelangelo's major projects in Rome are on view in this section. This includes a group of four double-sided drawings that relate to Michelangelo's preparations for the **Sistine Chapel ceiling** (1508–12). They date from the second half of his work on the ceiling, after the scaffolding from the first half was removed in the summer of 1511. Upon seeing his work from below for the first time, Michelangelo determined to make the figures larger and the compositions clearer. A key architectural drawing for the dome of the new **Saint Peter's Basilica** (begun in 1547) is also on view in this gallery. Following the death of architect Antonio da Sangallo in 1546, Pope Paul III appointed Michelangelo chief architect of the Basilica, entrusting the artist with this highly prestigious project despite his limited experience as an architect.

Highlights

Study of a striding male nude, to the left; studies of anatomical details (recto), 1504 or 1506. Michelangelo Buonarroti (Italian, 1475–1564). Black chalk, touches of white heightening; 40.4 x 25.8 cm. Teylers Museum, Haarlem, purchased in 1790. © Teylers Museum, Haarlem

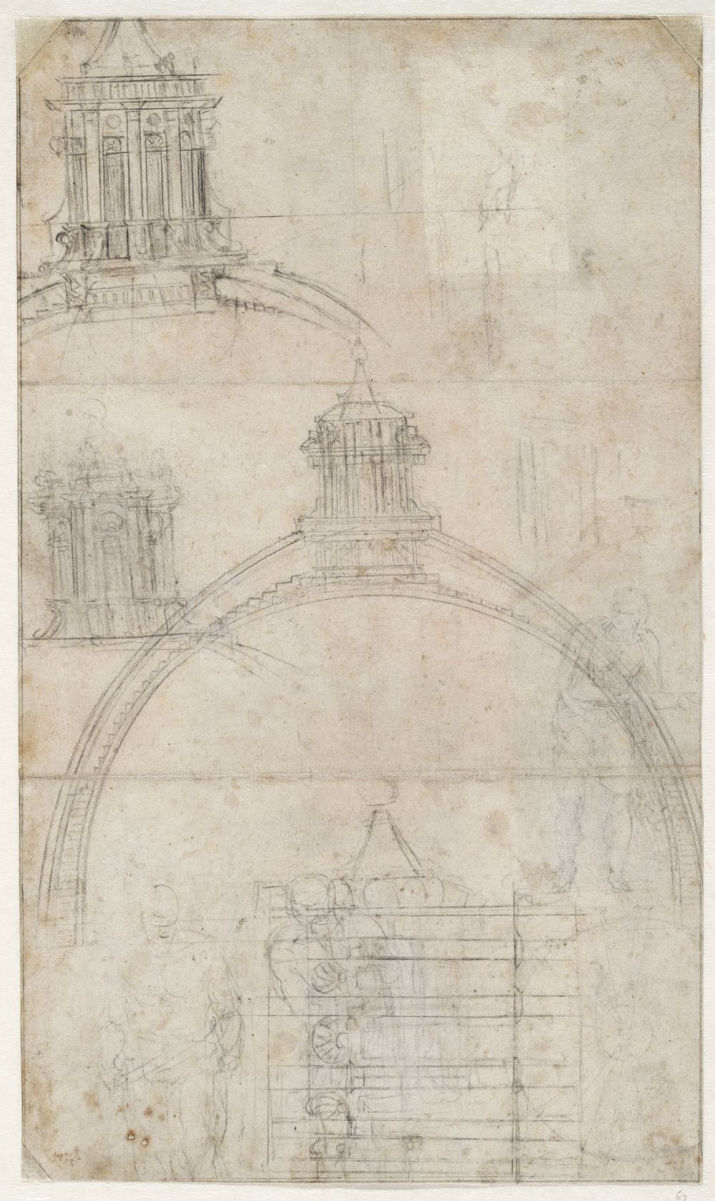
This is one of the few extant studies for Michelangelo's Battle of Cascina fresco, an early commission from the city of Florence for one wall of the city's council hall. It signifies a turning point in Michelangelo's rendering of the nude male form: active in pose and monumental in scale.

Seated male nude, separate study of his right arm (recto), 1511. Michelangelo Buonarroti (Italian, 1475–1564). Red chalk, heightened with white; 27.9 x 21.4 cm. Teylers Museum, Haarlem, purchased in 1790. © Teylers Museum, Haarlem

Michelangelo used red chalk to prepare the poses for the many nude male figures (*ignudi*) to adorn the spaces between the narrative scenes and the prophets on the Sistine Chapel ceiling. This is one of the most dynamic of the ignudi.

Study of a male nude; separate study of his head (recto), c. 1537–38. Michelangelo Buonarroti (Italian, 1475–1564). Black chalk; 24.2 x 18.2 cm. Teylers Museum, Haarlem, purchased in 1790. © Teylers Museum, Haarlem

This sheet is one of just a few survivors of the dozens (probably hundreds) of drawings that Michelangelo must have made relating to his *Last Judgment* fresco painted on the altar wall of the Sistine Chapel in Rome (1536–41). He prepared for the complex pose of Saint Lawrence with the efficient use of black chalk that is typical of his later drawings.



Section through the dome of Saint Peter's with alternative designs for the lantern; figure sketches (recto), 1547–59. Michelangelo Buonarroti (Italian, 1475–1564). Black chalk, stylus; 39.9 x 23.5 cm. Teylers Museum, Haarlem, purchased in 1790. © Teylers Museum, Haarlem

This rendering of the dome for Saint Peter's Basilica—probably made at a late stage in Michelangelo's design of the dome—focuses on his ideas for its lantern.

Tickets

Adults $15; seniors and adult group rate $10; member guests $7; students and children 6–17 $5; children 5 and under and CMA members FREE.

Become a Member

See ***Michelangelo: Mind of the Master*** for free when you become a CMA member [1]. Members are admitted free to most special exhibitions. Additionally, members have the opportunity to take advantage of other special discounts and exclusive events happening throughout the year.

Programming

MIX: Anatomy
Friday, October 4, 6:00–10:00 p.m.
Ames Family Atrium
$10 in advance, $15 at the door; exhibition admission included. CMA members free.
Italian Renaissance artist Michelangelo was a master painter, sculptor and architect. Drawing was at the heart of his creative process, and he had a lifelong interest in anatomy. Tonight, get drawn in to *Michelangelo: Mind of the Master* with figure drawing, gallery talks, guest artist displays and soundscapes by Mick Batyske, who has deejayed private events for the likes of Jay-Z, Michelle Obama, Sotheby's, *Vanity Fair* and MTV.

Lecture: Michelangelo's Figures, Turned and Toned
Saturday, October 12, 2:00 p.m.
Gartner Auditorium
Free; ticket required
Michelangelo devised an extraordinary number of figural poses throughout his career, from the soldiers in the *Battle of Cascina* to the *ignudi* on the Sistine Chapel ceiling and the damned in the Last Judgment. Cammy Brothers, associate professor of visual studies at Northeastern University, considers how the artist used drawing to create so many figures, what they shared and how his approach compared to that of contemporaries such as Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael.

Curator Talk: *Michelangelo: Mind of the Master*
Tuesday, October 29, 12:00 p.m.
Tuesday, November 19, 12:00 p.m.
Friday, December 13, 6:00 p.m.
Kelvin and Eleanor Smith Foundation Hall
Preregistration and exhibition ticket required
Curator Emily Peters leads a tour through the exhibition.

Performance
Apollo's Fire Baroque Bistro
Friday, September 27, 12:00 p.m.
Ames Family Atrium
Free; no ticket required
Members of Apollo's Fire, Cleveland's Grammy-winning baroque ensemble, celebrate Michelangelo and the sounds of his homeland. Dances and love songs by Monteverdi and Uccellini meet traditional street tunes, such as the "Pizzica di San Vito," in this rustic and playful tour of street music from Renaissance Italy.

Fretwork Presents "Music from the Age of Michelangelo"
Wednesday, October 23, 7:30 p.m.
Gartner Auditorium
$33–$45, CMA members $30–$40
Fretwork, the world's leading consort of viols, performs a program inspired by the exhibition

Michelangelo: Mind of the Master. In 1501 (Michelangelo was born in 1475) Ottaviano Petrucci published the *Harmonice Musices Odehecaton*, or *One Hundred Harmonic Pieces of Music*, featuring works by all the major composers of the time; much of the program is drawn from this book. Don't miss this illuminating concert featuring works by Marbriano de Orto, Johannes de Piñarol, Josquin Desprez and more.

Chamber Music in the Galleries
Wednesday, November 6, 6:00 p.m.
Free; no ticket required

Film

Michelangelo—Love and Death
Friday, October 18, 7:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 20, 1:30 p.m.
Morley Lecture Hall
$15, CMA members $11

Directed by David Bickerstaff, this recent film journeys from the print and drawing rooms of Europe through the chapels and museums of Florence, Rome and the Vatican to explore the tempestuous life of the great Renaissance artist. (UK, 2017, color, Blu-ray, approx. 90 min.)

The Agony and the Ecstasy
Sunday, December 29, 1:30 p.m.
Tuesday, December 31, 1:30 p.m.
Morley Lecture Hall
$10, CMA members $7

Michelangelo clashes with Pope Julius II over the painting of the Sistine Chapel ceiling in this lavish historical drama based on Irving Stone's novel and directed by Carol Reed. (USA/Italy, 1965, color, Blu-ray, 138 min.)

Catalogue

The works of Michelangelo (1475–1564) remain an enduring source of awe and fascination more than 500 years after his death. ***Michelangelo: Mind of the Master*** offers a new context for understanding the drawings of one of art history's greatest visionaries. Through a group of drawings held, since 1793, in the Teylers Museum, Haarlem, and once in the eminent collection of Queen Christina of Sweden (1626–1689), this book sheds new light on Michelangelo's inventive preparations for his most important and groundbreaking commissions in the realms of painting, sculpture and architecture. Among other works, the volume features preliminary designs for some of the artist's best-known projects, including the Sistine Chapel ceiling and the Medici Chapel tombs, focusing on the role of drawing in Michelangelo's mastery of the human form. Essays in the volume further explore the history and fate of Michelangelo's drawings during his life, and the role of Queen Christina and her heirs in amassing a group of drawings that are among the best preserved by the master today.

Author: Emily Peters, curator of prints and drawings at the Cleveland Museum of Art; Julian Brooks, senior curator of drawings at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles. With contributions from Edina Adam, Marjan Scharloo and Carel van Tuyll van Serooskerken.

Michelangelo: Mind of the Master is available at the Cleveland Museum of Art's store for $40 (hardcover).

Michelangelo: Mind of the Master is organized by the Teylers Museum in collaboration with the Cleveland Museum of Art and the J. Paul Getty Museum.

This exhibition is supported by an indemnity from the Federal Council on the Arts and the Humanities.

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About the Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art is renowned for the quality and breadth of its collection, which includes more than 63,000 artworks and spans 6,000 years of achievement in the arts. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and performing arts and is a leader in digital innovations. One of the top comprehensive art museums in the nation, recognized for its award-winning Open Access program and free of charge to all, the Cleveland Museum of Art is located in the University Circle neighborhood.

The museum is supported in part by residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture and made possible in part by the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), which receives support from the State of Ohio and the National Endowment for the Arts. The OAC is a state agency that funds and supports

quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically. For more information about the museum and its holdings, programs and events, call 888-CMA-0033 or visit cma.org [2].

Press Announcements [3]

Source URL: https://www.clevelandart.org/about/press/media-kit/cleveland-museum-art-presents-michelangelo-mind-master-featuring-more-50-drawings-italian

Links

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